



## **CORONA South 2002**

Despite being outnumbered, outgunned, and deep within enemy territory, in true Clancy novel fashion except it was real, US Air Force Combat Controller SSgt Matt Lienhard faced down and defeated America's adversary. There were times in our recent past when our troops on the ground would likely have been overrun in a similar situation; SSgt Lienhard made it look like just another day at work. I believe the difference is that we are beginning to witness the potential of transformation--a mindset that creates asymmetric military advantage by leveraging advanced technologies, focusing on capabilities-based Concepts of Operation, and harnessing innovative organizational changes.

Transformation expands the way we, as Airmen, think. It transcends just designing new systems. We are witnessing transformation when we see SSgt Lienhard riding horseback with a GPS and laser range finder as his tools of the trade on the saddle horn, complete with secure satellite and radio links, passing target coordinates to a B-52, and precisely placing a JDAM in the midst of enemy forces within 600 - 800 meters of his own position, with complete confidence. No single piece of this equation is transformational; rather, it is the integration of all our capabilities--both old and new--that elevates our operational effectiveness to new heights.

Matt's story was just one of the many outstanding briefings we discussed during CORONA South. I want to take this opportunity to briefly review some of the hot issues we addressed. Matt's story was hard to beat, but it vividly displayed in living color how real transformation gets down to the operator, and that's what the focus of CORONA South was. Two of the major components of transformation--advanced technologies and organizational change--were also discussed in detail.

### **Advanced Technologies**

An underlying element of SSgt Lienhard's transformational battlefield episode was his access to state-of-the-art technologies. Matt was not interested in platforms, he simply sought an effect--the ability to direct munitions to terminate the bad guys. He didn't care where they came from. After his briefing we asked Matt what we could do to help him do his job better. Matt's response was articulated in the form of an effect--he wanted the ability to more accurately designate his target. This man understands the bottom line: the reason we seek "advanced technologies" is to achieve an effect.

This point was illustrated in the Tanker "Fork in the Road" briefing given by XP. The specific effect we discussed was "booms in the sky." The KC-135 fleet is aging and one option is to replace the older KC-135E models by leasing a hundred new wide-body aircraft. Then, if we put our transformation hats on and we leverage technological advances in ISR and create "smart tankers," these aircraft can be integrated into a myriad of other missions. Another transformational effect we discussed dealt with the world of

UAVs. During OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM, we linked new systems (Predators) with legacy systems (AC-130) to enhance the effectiveness of Time Critical Targeting. It's this type of new thinking that has positioned us to use 21<sup>st</sup> century technology to win the 21<sup>st</sup> century wars.

### **Organizational Changes**

Eight briefings on the CORONA agenda were directly tied to one of the most critical transformation issues--organizational change. A key organization change we are stepping out on is in the area of aircraft maintenance. We studied this critical area with the Chief of Staff Logistics Review (CLR) and are now moving to implement its recommendations. First, we will decide in the coming weeks appropriate changes to maintenance, logistics and combat support career fields necessary for a true expeditionary force and to meet the challenges of aging aircraft. Additionally, we will give our CAF flying squadron commanders greater opportunity to learn the operational level of war, while maintaining emphasis in their ability to lead missions into combat.

The transformation of Headquarters Air Force is also underway. Recently, we directed the stand-up of two new organizations, AF/XI and AF/XOH. AF/XI's mission will be to orchestrate the integration of our warfighting systems--they will ensure we capitalize on the required technologies, CONOPs, and organizational changes needed to achieve true integration. Their charter will be to focus on new cutting edge ideas, thus avoiding the constraints of old think. AF/XOH's mission will be to develop AF policies for homeland security. Their charter will be to fully synchronize Air Force efforts with those of our sister services and other governmental organizations to ensure the safety of our nation.

### **Conclusion**

CORONA South '02 was a tremendous success--now it's time to forge ahead with the work needed to achieve our goals. I look forward to your suggestions and dialog as we continue our transformational efforts to ensure our Air Force remains the world's premiere air and space power.

